



Mary Bomar Sworn In As National Park Service Director

BOSTON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK Superintendent Terry W. Savage was among the 200 National Park Service employees and public officials present in Philadelphia's historic Congress Hall on October 3, 2006, when Northeast Regional Director Mary A. Bomar was sworn in as the 17th Director of the National Park Service.

On September 30, 2006, Bomar had been confirmed by the United States Senate as the next Director of the National Park Service. Bomar was nominated by President George W. Bush to head the Park Service after Director Fran Mainella announced her resignation in July.

Bomar, a British native who became a U.S. citizen in 1977, has been with the National Park Service for seventeen years, including posts as Acting Superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park and Superintendent at the Oklahoma City National Memorial. Upon her nomination, Bomar said, "Mere words cannot express how honored I am to be nominated as the 17th Director of the National Park Service by the President of the United States. For this 'American by Choice' it is the ultimate honor to be entrusted with the care of the crown jewels of America—our national parks. I will be proud to lead a passionate, committed, professional workforce working to ensure a wonderful experience for visitors today and for the generations yet to come."

Bomar has been the National Park Service Northeast Regional Director since July 2005. The region covers thirteen states and is responsible for a third of all NPS museum collections, a quarter of all historic structures, almost half of the country's National Historic Landmarks and more than half of the National Heritage Areas. Prior to that, Bomar served as Acting Regional Director.

As regional director, Bomar visited Boston National Historical Park on numerous occasions, attending the June 2005 groundbreaking ceremony for the Bunker Hill Monument and Museum rehabilitation project (*photo at right*) and, most recently, to attend a National Park Foundation event hosted by First Lady Laura Bush. "We are incredibly excited about



With her hand resting on an 18th-century Bible held by her husband Milton Bomar (right), Mary A. Bomar takes the oath of office as Director of the National Park Service from Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne.



(Continued on page 2)

GULAG Exhibit Comes to Boston

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, in a unique partnership with Amnesty International USA, the Gulag Museum at Perm-36, and the International Memorial Society, is presenting the first exhibition on the Soviet Gulag in the United States. *GULAG: Soviet Forced Labor Camps and the Struggle for Freedom* opened at Boston University's 808 Gallery on October 24, 2006, and will run through January 14, 2007. An opening reception took place on Thursday evening, November 2, 2006.

In Boston a dynamic, interdisciplinary planning committee has developed a companion exhibit along with a wide variety of related programming. The committee includes representatives from the National Park Service, Amnesty International USA, the Boston University Art Gallery, Boston University's School of Theatre, the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University, and Boston College.

The exhibit comes to Boston after a successful opening run on Ellis Island in New York where tens of thousands visited the exhibit, and it received significant critical acclaim. The *New York Times* (June 7, 2006) called the exhibit "powerful" and declared that "small things tell large truths...in spareness and simplicity." The *Wall Street Journal* (June 27, 2006) wrote that the small artifacts with which the story is told "are strikingly effective" and overall the exhibit has an "affecting, mesmerizing quality" which dramatically engages visitors. The *National Review Online* (August 1, 2006) congratulated the exhibit organizers for bringing "the often overlooked horrors (and lessons) of the Gulag to a wider audience."

This exhibit traces the history of the Soviet Union's forced labor camp system and its impact on Russia and the world today. The vast network of labor camps was an integral part of Stalin's plans for rapid industrialization. At its height the Gulag imprisoned or internally exiled over five million citizens, both repressing political opposition and providing labor for Stalin's economic program. Highlighted in the exhibit is the history of one camp in Russia's Ural Mountains, Perm-36, and how Russians committed to preserving the memory of the Gulag have transformed the labor camp into an historic site and museum. "Our mission is to promote democratic values and civic consciousness in contemporary Russia," says Victor Shmyrov, director of the Gulag Museum at

Boston University presents two special exhibitions...

GULAG: Soviet Forced Labor Camps and the Struggle for Freedom

October 24, 2006 — January 14, 2007

Territories of Terror Mythologies and Memories of the Gulag in Contemporary Russian-American Art

Perm-36, "through preservation of the last Soviet political labor camp."

Featured in the exhibit are rare artwork of former Gulag prisoners depicting the degrading living and working conditions; archival footage from Soviet propaganda films of the largest construction projects under Stalin's dictatorship; a re-creation of a dismal solitary confinement cell for political prisoners; portraits of former political prisoners at Perm-36; historic photographs; and artifacts depicting daily camp life: hand-made cups and spoons and crude tools prisoners employed in their backbreaking labors.

Two seemingly commonplace objects in the exhibit actually are remarkable testaments to the human determination for freedom in the face of brutal tyranny. The exhibit features a pair of toothbrushes inscribed with secret love messages for the recipients who were husband and wife, messages that escaped the scrutiny of the prison guards and inspired the prisoners to endure their harsh prison camp terms. Other noteworthy artifacts include a shovel sent by the United States government to assist the Soviet Union during World War II that ended up being used by slave laborers in the Gulag, a common occurrence, and small glass vials utilized to pass secret messages between prisoners.

Mary Bomar, Director of the National Park Service, declared, "The National Park Service is proud to partner with the Gulag Museum, a historic site dedicated to preser-

vation, education, and connecting history to contemporary concerns. In the spirit of our National Park Service Civic Engagement initiative, this exhibit examines the meaning of liberty and the complex relationship of history, memory, and the present."

The National Park Service provided the major funding for this exhibit. Additional funding was provided by The Bodman Family Foundation, The Trust for Mutual Understanding, Eastern National, The Lynde & Harry Bradley Foundation, Amnesty International USA, and generous individuals.

A companion exhibition will run concurrently at the Boston University Art Gallery, located at 855 Commonwealth Avenue. *Territories of Terror: Mythologies and Memories of the Gulag in Contemporary Russian-American Art*, curated by Svetlana Boym, Curt Hugo Reisinger Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures and Professor of Comparative Literature at Harvard University, is one of the first attempts to tackle the history and mythology of the Gulag through contemporary art. The exhibition features works by a distinguished group of internationally recognized contemporary artists including: Grisha Bruskin, Irina Nakhova, Komar & Melamid, Vadim Zakharov, Eugene Yelchin, and Leonid Sokov.

—MARTY BLATT

Bomar Sworn In

(Continued from page 1)

Mary's confirmation and eager to continue working with her in her new capacity as director," said Boston National Historical Park Superintendent Terry Savage. "She is a career park professional with proven leadership and invaluable on-the-ground experience."

From 2003 to 2005, Bomar was Superintendent of Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia. She also served as the first Superintendent at the Oklahoma City National Memorial, the first NPS Oklahoma State Coordinator, Acting Superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park and Assistant Superintendent at the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Prior to joining the National Park Service, Bomar worked in a managerial capacity at the Department of Defense.

—SEAN HENNESSEY

Park Funding Assists With Old State House Preservation Project

THE OLD STATE HOUSE has recently had its exterior masonry repaired in order to correct years of leaking walls that were ruining the interiors of the Council Chamber. The Bostonian Society, with funds provided by Boston National Historical Park and a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, contracted with Lee Kennedy Construction Co. to undertake the masonry rehabilitation along with repairs to windows and interior paneling and trim damaged by water penetrating the brick walls. Work started this past July under the direction of Donald Tellalian, AIA, and David Storeygard, AIA, of Tellalian Associates Architects & Planners with technical preservation support by Dr. Judith Selwyn of Preservation Technology Associates.

Approaching 300 years old and subjected to changes ranging from the construction of the MBTA station to restorative campaigns, the brick walls of the Old State House tell a vivid story of the building's long and illustrious history. But this patchwork quilt of brick and failing repointing fails to keep the driving rains of a typical Nor'easter blowing their way through the canyon of highrise



Preservation consultant Judith Selwyn took this image of the Old State House surrounded by scaffolding during the recent repointing project.

towers surrounding this historic structure from penetrating the walls and soaking parts of the interior.

Faced with the dilemma of wanting to save as much of what was left of the original 1713 brickwork yet make the walls resistive to rain moving through them it was decided to repoint only the most exposed north and east walls and to retrofit the interior of the walls with a venting system that would trap any moisture before it reached the interior finishes. This work has recently been completed along with extensive window repairs and to the delight of all who were involved with this state-of-the-art restoration you can not tell that it ever occurred.

But this is not the end of the Bostonian Society's preservation efforts for the Old State House. Scaffolding encasing the wood tower will soon be erected so that it too can receive needed repair and replacement of rotted woodwork and siding. This portion of the rehabilitation will be documented by the History Channel this winter requiring the work to be conducted under wraps to protect it from the cold of New England Winters.

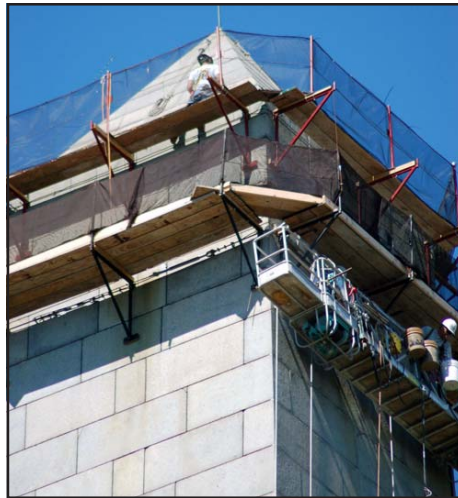
—BILL BARLOW

Bunker Hill Monument Project Progresses

WORK CONTINUES on the Bunker Hill Monument with a scheduled reopening of the Monument and Lodge on April 2, 2007, and a grand opening of the new museum planned to correspond with Bunker Hill Week activities in June 2007. This project is a major rehabilitation to preserve the Monument, Lodge, and site and to improve the visitor experience.

Work on the monument and grounds began in May. A "crow's nest" was built around the top of the monument that supported swing scaffolding to allow repointing of the granite blocks on the Monument's North and East faces, the top four courses on all faces, and the entire top, or pyramidian.

New pedestrian-scale lighting will illuminate the newly paved perimeter walk at the top of the hill and the Monument will be lit with all new exterior lighting. Barrier-free access will be provided from the street into the base of the Monument through a new wheelchair ramp on the site and a new entrance into the side of the Lodge. A ramp will connect the Lodge to the base of the Monument. The Monument was built between 1825 and 1843 and the Lodge was built in 1902. The site attracts almost 200,000 visitors each year.



A worker on the scaffolding erected at the top of the Bunker Hill Monument repoints a joint between its granite blocks.

The Bunker Hill Museum building, a three-story brick structure located adjacent to the grounds on Monument Square, is being renovated as an interpretive facility that tells the story of the Battle of Bunker Hill, the story of the Bunker Hill Monument, and the history of the Charlestown community. There will be interpretive panels, historic artifacts, and an audio-visual display to aid in the presentation. The museum will be handicapped-accessible with new accessible restrooms and an elevator to all three floors. The top two floors will house the new exhibits with a community meeting space on the ground floor. The National Park Service is working in partnership on the renovation project with the City of Boston, which owns the Bunker Hill Museum building, and with the Charlestown Historical Society. Supplementing National Park Service funds were generous donations from the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts and Osram Sylvania and contributions from Partners Healthcare and Boston Duck Tours.

For more information, please visit the Charlestown Navy Yard Visitor Center at the Bunker Hill Pavilion, 55 Constitution Road; call 617-242-5601; or view the park web site.

—RUTH RAPHAEL

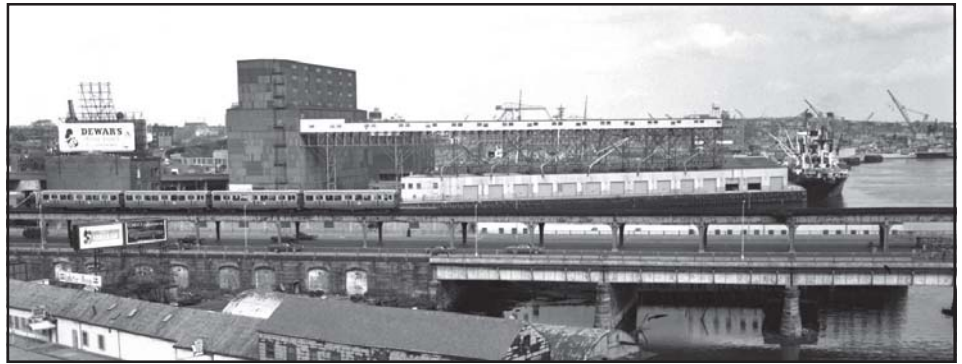
"Serving the Fleet"

ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS of my young life, growing up in Everett and Malden in the late forties and early fifties, was to take what is today called the Orange Line from Everett Station into downtown Boston. When the elevated train crossed the Charlestown Bridge, I would excitedly stand up, turn around, kneel down on the old wooden benches and press my nose against the glass. As far as the eye could see, the old Navy Yard, now nearly empty of ships, was filled with ships of the U.S. Navy.

What made the sight even more exciting for me was the fact that my dad, "Happy" Vaughan, worked there. Too old to enlist for the armed forces in 1941 (he fought with the Yankee Division in World War I), he went to work as a civilian at the Naval Operating Bases in Quonset, R.I., and Argentia, Newfoundland, before coming to work at the Boston Navy Yard in 1943 as an electrician. When John Manson and Ethan Beeler asked me if I would like to continue my interpretive duties at the Navy Yard, my joy was complete. Once here, I sought to do something special in memory of my dad.

When I learned from Bill Casey that he had painstakingly saved most of the photos and text panels from the dismantled "Serving the Fleet" exhibit that had been in Building 125, I said "Let's get them out where the public can see them!" Impressed by the power and beauty, even, of these historic images, I envisioned nothing fancy.

Any visit to the Charlestown Navy Yard Visitor Center/Bunker Hill Pavilion on Constitution Road prior to May 2006 would leave one puzzled as to its connection to the historic facility beyond Gate 1. Display panels



A Navy Yard photographer captured this image of an elevated train crossing the Charlestown Bridge in Oct. 1967. The tops of various cranes serving the yard can be seen in the distance. The tall structure to the left of center is the Boston & Maine Railroad grain elevator. The Navy Yard Visitor Center is now located on that site. (BOSTS-8667)



These two views show portions of the temporary "Serving the Fleet" exhibit in the Navy Yard Visitor Center. Both the Visitor Center and a new, permanent version of the exhibition are scheduled to move into rehabilitated space in Building 5 in the Navy Yard in 2007.

were already in place at the Visitor Center just awaiting a little realignment, and, of course, the correct positioning of these icons of the men and machinery that "served the fleet" for 174 years. And why not the models of USS *Cassin Young* and USS *Mason* that were stored away safely from public view?

Hours of scraping black adhesive off the

backs of masonite panels and some sixty feet of velcro later, a modest exhibit emerged by the middle of May. "Serving the Fleet" lives, albeit truncated; but one hopes that the visitor will get a stronger sense that the Charlestown Navy Yard Visitor Center does, indeed, serve the Navy Yard.

—TERRENCE M. VAUGHAN

Park Holds Health and Safety Fair

ON OCTOBER 25, 2006, the Boston NHP Human Resources Office and the park Safety Committee jointly sponsored an Employee Health and Safety Fair in the Hull Room in Building 5.

Representatives of various groups which provide healthcare services to federal employees provided information on their offerings (*photo at right*), while the Safety Committee showed a series of



safety-related videos and sponsored a "hands-on" fire extinguisher training (*photo at left*).

The event was well attended by Boston NHP employees as well as those from several other area parks.

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON



Roxbury and the American Revolution: Fostering relationships to expand park's partners



Photo Credit: Discovery Roxbury



"Listening to this history made me realize that I live in a great place because history is right in my back yard."

"Another thing that sticks out in my mind is the two hundred African American soldiers from Massachusetts that served in the Revolutionary War. That surprised me because I did not know that they allowed black soldiers in the army."

"I found it a little shocking to know that our own troops were here and used to live in the neighborhood where I live now."

Comments from Boston Public School Students attending
the *Roxbury in the Revolution* program, spring 2006.

Discover Roxbury

"We are eager to learn about the earlier history of our local community. Our vision is to develop our students into spokespeople for their community's early history and to create opportunities for the children to share that history with their families and even the public. Uncovering the roots of Roxbury's history is an essential piece of learning for our students who, more than any other population, deserve to know their community's important role in our country's history."

Ilene Carver, Third Grade Teacher, Orchard Gardens Pilot School, Roxbury

After cannons were placed by colonial troops on Dorchester Heights, just south of Boston, British General William Howe decided to evacuate Boston on March 17, 1776 with 6,000 soldiers and 1,000 loyalists. The evacuation, stemming from an eleven month siege by the colonial militia, became General George Washington's first military victory in the American Revolution. The nearby town of Roxbury played an important part in this victory due to its strategic location to Dorchester Heights.

230 years later the National Park Service (NPS) Northeast Region awarded Boston National Historical Park (NHP) \$4,500 for a civic engagement proposal to explore the role of Roxbury and Washington's first victory. In this proposal Boston NHP will establish a relationship with Discover Roxbury, a non-profit organization, offering programs on the history and culture of one of Boston's most diverse communities. By first establishing a sustainable and dynamic relationship with Discover Roxbury and the affiliated historic sites, Boston NHP hopes to foster stewardship beyond the park's boundaries and expand the park's story of Boston and the American Revolution.

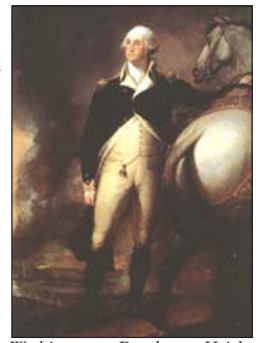
Together, Boston NHP and Discover Roxbury staff will collaborate to develop education and public programs to tell Roxbury's story in the American Revolution.

Historical Background

After the beginning of the American Revolution at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts on April 19, 1775, colonial troops from New England laid siege to British-occupied Boston. In Philadelphia, colonial delegates who had created the first national government of these united colonies appointed a military leader, George Washington. He arrived in Cambridge, July 2, 1775, two weeks after the Battle of Bunker Hill.

His daunting task was to drive the British regulars from Boston and create a unified army from a disparate group of local militia. More than a quarter of these troops, including African Americans and Native Americans were encamped in Roxbury, eye to eye with British regulars on Boston Neck.

Washington accomplished these tasks in less than a year. He assigned the command of these colonial troops to a local man, General John Thomas. On March 4, 1776 General John Thomas and his men fortified Dorchester Heights.



Washington at Dorchester Heights
Original Artist: Gilbert Stuart

This prompted the evacuation of British forces and loyalists on March 17, 1776. This evacuation became General Washington's first victory in the American Revolution.

Community Involvement

Our key planning meeting took the form of a brain storming session in December, 2005. This gathering brought together Roxbury community leaders, teachers, college professors, historic site staff, Discover Roxbury volunteers and board members and NPS staff to view the sites and reach a consensus on how best to proceed.

This group identified specific goals for 2006. The group suggested that research was needed to provide a more inclusive story for future programs. The group also explored the idea to collaborate with South Boston Citizen's Association for the March 2006 Evacuation Day event commemorating the fortification of Dorchester Heights. Most importantly, the gathering served to initiate the development of the pilot education programs by May 2006.



Left to right: Dec. '05
Brain Storming
Session; Rep. Byron
Rushing conducting
tour

Photo credit:
Boston NHP

Research

A central goal of the Discover Roxbury education program is interpreting the role of African Americans and Native Americans in the *Siege of Boston*, specifically their involvement at the Roxbury camp. Boston NHP's study, *Patriots of Color*, illustrated these contributions at Lexington and Concord and the Battle of Bunker Hill. More research was needed to expand the scope of the contributions of people of color.

Eleven Harvard Extension students from Dr. Bob Allison's History of Boston class volunteered for the assignment. With the expertise of Suffolk University archivist Beth Bower, they uncovered a wealth of information at the Massachusetts Historical Society, The Boston Public Library, The New England Genealogical Society and the Massachusetts State Archives.



Harvard Extension student, Lauretta Woods, researching
primary sources at the Massachusetts Historical Society
Photo credit: Harvard University Gazette, April 6, 2006

Developing Education Program

Boston NHP staff and Discover Roxbury developed the *Roxbury in the Revolution* program, an interactive walking tour for students of all ages. They also trained twelve Roxbury residents who were hired as docents to present the new program. Over 450 young people and adults from Boston and suburban schools, summer camps, and colleges participated in *Roxbury in the Revolution*.



Park Rangers with Discovery Roxbury Docents
at Dorchester Heights Photo credit: Discover Roxbury

Developing Education Program

A core group of five teachers from Boston and Wellesley schools will contribute to the further development of the program.

Stops on the tour include the Dillaway Thomas House, headquarters for General John Thomas, commander of the Roxbury troops; the First Church in Roxbury, (both the green where the patriots troops camped, and the interior) and the site of Fort Hill, strategically placed to guard the land route out of Boston and still a dramatic and scenic vista.

Crossing the street from the Dillaway Thomas House to First Church, docents always point out Dorchester Heights Monument which can be seen in the distance, making the historical connection between Roxbury and Dorchester Heights, now South Boston.



Top to bottom: Dillaway Thomas House; First Church in Roxbury, First Graders at the Dillaway Thomas House; Students at Fort Hill.
Photo credit: Discover Roxbury

"Two Hills, Two Generals" Evacuation Day Event

The South Boston Citizen's Association (SBCA) annually plans the Evacuation Day event with the park staff commemorating March 17, 1776 and Dorchester Heights Monument. SBCA collaborates with park staff to preserve Dorchester Heights Monument and to educate the local community about the national significance of this site.

Recognizing the opportunity to expand the event, SBCA President Mike Bare contacted and met with Roxbury historic site representatives and Boston NHP staff. Together they created an event which told the story of the fortification of Dorchester Heights and its connection with the Roxbury historic sites. Mt. Washington Bank and the MBTA Employee's Credit Union provided the majority of financial support for this event.

"Historically connecting the dots from Fort Hill in Roxbury to Dorchester Heights in South Boston, highlighting an 'inner city Freedom Trail,' is, and I hope will continue to be, a great way of helping kids of all ages from Roxbury, Dorchester and South Boston experience and breathe in a sense of pride in their respective neighborhoods. After all, these are the places at which America's Freedom began. The 'Two Hills, Two Generals' Project was a collaborative success, initiated by the (Boston) NHP, which retied the knot that bound these communities historically and socially. My intent was historical commemoration, the healing of old wounds and building of new relationships are by-products, though extremely welcome ones."

Mike Bare, SBCA President



Top to bottom: Dorchester Heights Monument; Crowd attending the event; Ft. Toconderoga Fife and Drum Corp; Contest Winner Winston Yu and SBCA President Mike Bare at First Church in Roxbury; Shirley Eustis House.
Photo credit: Boston NHP

"Two Hills, Two Generals" Evacuation Day Event, "Continued"

In a March 12, 2006 article, *Boston Globe* reporter Michael Kenney interviewed Michael Bare and Carlos Henriquez, vice president of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative's board of directors, about the upcoming Evacuation Day event. Mr. Kenney described these gentlemen :

"as leaders in their respective communities who have come together to plan this collaborative event. Both men saw the reenactment as bringing together two communities that have viewed each other with suspicion, if not outright hostility, in more recent decades."

'I'm very cognizant that the image of bringing the two communities together is in the background of this,' said Bare. 'We share a lot of history,' said Henriquez. 'This is a good way to bridge two neighborhoods which have always been next to each other, but not always with each other.'

*Boston Globe, March 12, 2006
Article by Mr. Michael Kenney*

Due to the perseverance and energy of SBCA President Michael Bare, the event was successful in creating possibilities for future collaborative events. Over 200 local residents from Roxbury and South Boston participated in the activities throughout the day.

During the event, Boston's Mayor Thomas M. Menino, Congressman Michael Capuano, Suffolk County Sheriff Andrea Cabral, and Carlos Henriquez joined representatives from the Roxbury historic sites, Roxbury Historical Society, Dorchester Historical Society, Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Henry Knox Lodge and Prince Hall Grand Lodge and many other organizations.

Mayor Menino also introduced Boston Latin School 10th grader Winston Yu, who won the essay writing contest. Winston won a two week summer internship at Fort Ticonderoga Museum.

The Future of the Civic Engagement Project

Boston NHP is still in the embryonic stages of developing a relationship with the Roxbury community. Collaborating with Discover Roxbury and the Roxbury historic sites opens the door for the park to connect with residents who live in its backyard. This civic engagement project offers many opportunities for the park staff to develop a relationship with neighbors and uncover the history that binds us all.

As a result of the first year's collaboration NPS Northeast Region awarded the park a second, larger grant to continue the research aspect of the program and to incorporate this research into the education programs and future public programs. It is hoped that uncovering the untold stories of Roxbury will increase the public's awareness and understanding of local history. We trust that this awareness and understanding will lead to increased joint stewardship of the Roxbury historic sites and Boston NHP's resources.

"The National Park Service acted as a catalyst, bringing together an eclectic group of community leaders, students, academic historians, and many ordinary citizens who have been inspired to research and to present to the broader public the story of Boston and Roxbury in the American Revolution."

Dr. Robert Allison, Chair, History Department,
Suffolk University

Boston National Historical Park wishes to thank:

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Roxbury Historical Society
Roxbury Heritage State Park
Shirley Eustis House
First Church in Roxbury
Mike Bare, President and the South Boston
Citizen's Association
Dudley Square Main Streets
Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative
Suffolk University
Eastern National
MBTA Employee Credit Union
Mt. Washington Bank
Bostonian Society
Old South Meeting House

For more information on Roxbury historic sites and Boston NHP visit www.discoverroxbury.org and www.nps.gov/bost/.

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Sheila Cooke-Kayser

Accessibility for USS Cassin Young (DD-793): More Than Ramps and Lifts

WHEN ONE THINKS of providing handicap accessibility to a historic structure, wheelchairs are what immediately come to mind. Barrier-free access, to use the proper terminology, for a building can involve anything from eliminating a single step up to a doorway by regrading to the construction of extensive systems of ramps and wheelchair lifts. Inside, ramping and elevators are the primary means of providing access to levels other than that of the entry point. The guidelines established under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) encourage “mainstreaming” of accessible entrances to avoid having wheelchair users feel like second-class individuals shunted off to some back entrance.¹

Retrofitting of historic structures requires a careful balancing act between providing access and destroying the character-defining features of the building in the process. Architects have become extremely creative in balancing these needs.

The problems of providing accessibility are even greater when one looks at historic ships. Not only were ships intended for the able-bodied, but they have to move with the tide as they sit at piers. Ships are also less able to be physically modified for wheelchair movement once a wheelchair user is aboard. The six-inch distance between a hatchway and the deck is part of the historic character of the ship’s structure, and thus cannot be simply cut away (most hatchways are also too narrow for wheelchairs).

All of these factors came into play when Boston National Historical Park began to plan for providing accessibility to USS Cassin Young (DD-793), berthed at Pier 1 East of the Charlestown Navy Yard. The Fletcher-class destroyer had a distinguished World War II record; that record was recognized by her designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) by the Secretary of the Interior in 1986. More important to the interpretive program of the Navy Yard, the ship’s current physical configuration is the product of modification work undertaken by the Boston Naval Ship-



Protected by a black plastic cover, the wheelchair lift sits next to the new aluminum brow at the fantail of USS Cassin Young. This view was taken at low tide, which creates an angle that is too steep to allow wheelchair access.

yard in the 1950s. The National Park Service (NPS) has recently completed an historic furnishings report which calls for the furnishing of the ship as she was at the time of the completion of her last major overhaul in 1958.

Boston Harbor has a ten-foot tidal range. To access the ship, visitors first climb steps to a five-foot high pier platform and then traverse a brow which can be at extreme angles at high or low tide. For this reason, the brow surface has cleats to provide traction. Almost as soon as they step onto the deck, visitors encounter a large winch. Under normal operation, the main deck, including the interior of the forward deckhouses, is open for self-guided tours. Visitors can access areas above and below the main deck only on guided tours which are offered on a scheduled basis during the peak season.

To solve the problem of getting wheelchair users on board the vessel, the park consulted with the City of Boston’s Commission for Persons with Disabilities. The City of Boston is a growing cruise ship port, and thus has considerable experience in providing wheelchair access to ships. Those consultations led to a recommendation that rather than installing an extensive ramping system, the park should acquire a manual portable wheelchair lift and replace the current brow with one having a smooth surface. Everyone recognized that accessibility could not be provided at either tidal extreme.

Following up on these recommendations, the park submitted a funding request for the project to the NPS regional office. Once the park was notified that the project had been funded, it began the procurement process. First, it purchased a new aluminum

pier stand and smooth-surfaced brow. Then, it acquired a manual wheelchair lift. Once these were received, it became evident that the smooth surface of the accessible brow would present severe problems to visitors walking on it at extreme tides and under wet conditions. Thus, the park chose to retain the existing wooden platform and aluminum cleated brow at the quarterdeck and locate the new platform, lift, and brow at the fantail. Because the five-foot rise

is the maximum for the lift and there is no need for it to be constantly moved, the park has taken additional measures to stabilize and secure the lift.

Most accessibility projects would have been considered complete at this point. However, getting wheelchair users on board is only a part of the solution. Short of major physical modifications which would destroy the historic integrity of the ship, wheelchair visitors are still limited to the exterior of the main deck aft of the forward breakwater bulkhead. In addition, visitors who are not in wheelchairs but have other mobility issues (many visitors are in the senior citizen category) find it difficult to negotiate the steep ladders required to participate in guided tours above and below the main deck.

Thus, the park decided to undertake what is known under ADA as programmatic

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As Park Safety Officer Art Norris looks on, Park Ranger Emily Prigot pushes a wheelchair with USS Cassin Young maintenance worker Ed Coughlin playing the passenger onto the lift during staff training on June 29, 2006.

¹ As federal property managed by a federal agency, USS Cassin Young is technically subject to the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) issued under the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 rather than the regulations issued under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The two sets of guidelines, while not identical, are very similar in content.

Accessibility for USS *Cassin Young* (DD-793): More Than Ramps and Lifts

(Continued from page 6)

accessibility. This involves providing persons with disabilities with alternative means of experiencing the resource. In this instance, the chosen approach was to produce video tours of the ship. These tours would be available on a portable player at pierside and also at the Navy Yard's visitor center. In addition to serving the mobility impaired, they could also provide an interpretive experience for visitors coming on days when the ship was closed due to weather conditions or staff shortages.

The simplest way of providing such tours would be a "cinema verité" video recording of the normal tour route. While this approach would meet the technical requirements of accessibility, it would provide little in the way of interpretation. Thus, the park decided to hire a professional documentary film production firm to produce the tour videos. Based on the general expectations as to length, the park requested proposals from audio-visual production firms on contract to the NPS Harpers Ferry Center, which is its central exhibit and audio-visual production office. The successful bidder was Signature Communications, a firm based in Huntingtown, Maryland.

Once Signature was on board, the park convened an on-site meeting involving both the contractor and the park staff. The results of this meeting were not only preliminary decisions as to what spaces each tour would encompass but also a decision that the primary interpretive theme of the programs would be teamwork. One of the key additions to the video involved inclusion of the fire room and engine room, spaces which are not normally accessible to any visitor. Based on materials which the park supplied, including the text of existing interpretive labels on main deck com-



partments, histories of the ship, and videos of ranger-led tours, the contractor produced initial drafts of scripts for each tour.

In the process of reviewing the scripts, it became apparent that they were somewhat dry in their approach. Thus, the park recommended that quotations from the extensive oral history program undertaken by the park shortly after it first acquired *Cassin Young* in 1978 be incorporated. To that end, the contractor expanded a proposed two-day filming schedule to three days to allow time to review oral history transcripts.

The first rough cuts of the video products, with temporary narration, revealed omissions which needed to be addressed. For example, the main deck tour included the emergency radio room and captain's in-port cabin; radio central and the captain's sea cabin, both on the above decks tour, had not been included. The rough cuts also demonstrated that the videos were too sterile, lacking a human component. Thus, the park arranged for a two-day additional visit by the contractor. The first day provided the contractor the opportunity to review the park's archive of ship photographs and cruise books

with a view to obtaining historical images to include in the videos. The second day was set aside for additional on-board filming. This included the additional spaces not addressed during the original visit as well as retakes of sequences in other spaces to correct problems (such as a missing chair back in the wardroom) seen in the rough cut.

Throughout the process, the park continued to refine the script. Once that process was completed, the contractor recorded the final narration using professional narrators. This final narration was included in the second cut reviewed by the park. Everyone agreed that the inclusion of historic images provided the human element missing in the straight contemporary footage, and most of the comments involved the introduction of additional historic imagery.

The last step in the production addressed another portion of the disabled community. Both videos were closed captioned so that persons with hearing difficulties could read the narration.

The final tour videos are on DVD, with menus which allow viewers to either play an entire program or simply view the individual chapter covering the space they are interested in seeing. Each program runs approximately twenty minutes. Because the DVD allows for considerably more material, the park has placed a documentary which it had produced internally in 1990 on the World War II kamikaze attacks on the ship on the DVD. This, too, has been closed captioned, something it had not been in its original videotape version.

By going beyond what people normally think of when they hear "handicapped accessibility"—wheelchair access—Boston National Historical Park has made USS *Cassin Young* accessible to a much wider group of individuals. Indeed, the video aspect of the project goes beyond simply showing people unable to board the ship or climb the ladders what they are missing. It provides an opportunity to bring the ship to a wider audience in a way that helps them understand not only what they are seeing in terms of a physical resource but also what it was like for sailors serving on a "tin can" during both World War II and the Cold War.

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON

Salute to the Sea



Boston Children's Theatre performed Salute to the Sea, a medley of nautical songs and poems, in front of USS Cassin Young on July 27. These very talented actors also performed John Brown's Body based on Stephen Vincent Béné't's poem about the Civil War inside Faneuil Hall on August 14. This summer marks the 55th year of Boston Children's Theatre's summer touring program in parks, camps, community centers, and theaters throughout the Greater Boston Area. Eastern National generously funded the performances for Boston NHP visitors.

Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the June-July-August 2006 issue of *Anchor Watch*, the quarterly journal of the Historic Naval Ships Association.

BNHP News Notes

- Our condolences to **Sheila Cooke-Kayser** and **Bill Casey** on recent losses in their families.
- Long-time Maintenance employee and shuttle driver **John Goggin** retired in June.
- Changes in the Protection Division have included the transfers of Park Rangers **Dave Ballam** and **Jamie Potratz** to Prince William Forest Park and New River Gorge National River, respectively, and the arrival of **Lauren Schorr**, **Dave Lamere**, **Greg Morse**, and **Peter Reitchel**.
- **Josue DelValle** has joined the Maintenance staff; he formerly worked for the Navy Yard security guard contractor.
- **Phinazee Brown** returned to the park as a Pipefitter in September.
- **Bob Stackowski** of the Contracting Office transferred to a position at the Northeast Regional Office in Boston in September.
- USS *Cassin Young* lost a dedicated volunteer in **Nick Colella** when he moved from the Boston area in June.
- Park Ranger **Dan Gagnon** was on detail to Salem Maritime NHS from September 7 to 28.
- Education Specialist **Sheila Cooke-Kayser** and Discover Roxbury Executive Director **Marica Butman** presented a paper on the *Discover Roxbury* Civic Engagement project at the American Association for State and Local History conference on Presidential Sites and Libraries at Hyde Park, N.Y., on June 22.
- The National Moment of Remembrance on May 29 saw Moments of Silence on USS *Cassin Young* and at the Visitor Center. On USS *Cassin Young* "Taps" was played along with a reading of the names of those killed on the ship during World War II.

Charlestown Navy Yard Maritime Day Successful

CHARLESTOWNNAVY YARD Maritime Day on July 27 was a success despite the high temperatures! The events featured performances of *Salute to the Sea* by the Boston Children's Theater and Gary Foreman of the USS Constitution Museum doing *Building Teamwork Through Song*. The day also featured special programs by staff including a talk on Rosie the Riveter, a Navy Yard Scavenger Hunt, and a Paper Chain Forge activity. Special recognition goes to Emily Prigot, Dan Gagnon, and Sheila Cooke-Kayser for their work in putting it together.

—SHEILA COOKE-KAYSER



Rosie the Riveter (Park Ranger Emily Prigot, second from right) poses with participants in the Paper Chain Forge activity held during Maritime Day at the Charlestown Navy Yard.

- The May visit of *The CAT*, Canada's high-speed car ferry, sponsored by Nova Scotia/Prince Edward Island Tourism Promotion, drew nearly 15,000 people to the Charlestown Navy Yard.
- Boston African American NHS's program *An Abolitionist Independence Day* on June 24, 2006, with **Merrill Kohlfoer** and **Guy Peartree** portraying Frederick Douglass and Henry David Thoreau was very successful and very well attended.
- The Museum of African American History sponsored a program at the African Meeting House on July 19, 2006, to celebrate the release of the book *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory* by Drs. James and Lois Horton.
- Following the return of the Northeast Museum Services Center staff to the Marine Barracks in June, the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation moved into Quarters C in the Navy Yard in July.

Gene Gabriel Retires



Boston NHP Facilities Manager Gene Gabriel, seen here with Superintendent Terry Savage, retired on November 3, 2006, after more than thirty years of service with the National Park Service. Gene, who came to Boston in 2002 after many years in the same position at Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, was honored by colleagues from both parks at a November 2 reception in the Commandant's House.

HMS Chatham (F-87) Visits Charlestown Navy Yard

THE ROYAL NAVY FRIGATE HMS *Chatham* (F-87) visited the Charlestown Navy Yard in early November 2006. She is the latest vessel to participate in Boston National Historical Park's Visiting Ships Program, inaugurated in July 1976 by HMY *Britannia*.

HMS *Chatham*, a Batch 3 Frigate, was built on the Tyne by Swan Hunters Shipbuilders Ltd. *Chatham* and her sister ships fulfil a variety of roles including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence gathering, and boarding operations.

The Boston port visit occurred during the return leg of a six-month deployment to the South Atlantic during which *Chatham* reached the milestone of having steamed a half million miles since commissioning in 1990.

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON



HMS Chatham (F-87) is seen at Pier 1 West at the Charlestown Navy Yard on November 3, 2006. Note the ship's Lynx helicopter on her flight deck. In the foreground can be seen the floating barrier installed across the Fitchburg Slip between Pier 1 and Hoosac Pier in mid-October as part of the upgrade of security measures for USS Constitution.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
BOSTON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD
BOSTON, MA 02129-4543

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



THE BROADSIDE

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Park Sites & Partners

Boston Marine Society

Building 32, Charlestown Navy Yard
www.bostonmarinesociety.org
617-242-0522

Bunker Hill Monument

Monument Sq., Charlestown
www.nps.gov/bost/Bunker_Hill.htm
617-242-5641

Charlestown Navy Yard Visitor Center

55 Constitution Rd., Charlestown
www.nps.gov/bost/Navy_Yard.htm
617-242-5601

Dorchester Heights

Thomas Park, South Boston
www.nps.gov/bost/Dorchester_Heights.htm
617-242-5642

Downtown Visitor Center

15 State St., Boston
www.nps.gov/bost
617-242-5642
617-242-5689 (TDD)

Faneuil Hall

Faneuil Hall Sq., Boston
www.nps.gov/bost/Faneuil_Hall.htm
617-242-5675

Old North Church

(Christ Church in the City of Boston)
193 Salem St., Boston
www.oldnorth.org
617-523-6676

Old South Meeting House

(Old South Association)
310 Washington St., Boston
www.oldsouthmeetinghouse.org
617-482-6439

Old State House

(Managed by The Bostonian Society)
206 Washington St., Boston
www.bostonhistory.org
617-720-3292

Paul Revere House

(Paul Revere Memorial Association)
19 North Sq., Boston
www.paulreverehouse.org
617-523-2338

USS Constitution

(U.S. Navy)
Pier 1, Charlestown Navy Yard
www.ussconstitution.navy.mil
617-242-7511

USS Constitution Museum

(USS Constitution Museum Foundation)
Building 22, Charlestown Navy Yard
www.ussconstitutionmuseum.org
617-426-1812

Did you know...?

That the African Meeting House on Boston's Beacon Hill will be celebrating its bicentennial in December 2006.

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Civic Engagement: A Special Supplement

THIS ISSUE of THE BROADSIDE highlights two of the many Civic Engagement projects that the National Park Service has been involved with over the past year.

The first project is the Boston appearance of the travelling exhibit *GULAG: Soviet Forced Labor Camps and the Struggle for Freedom*. Boston National Historical Park Chief of Cultural Resources/Historian Marty Blatt and his predecessor, Louis Hutchins, now with the Northeast Museum Services Center, were the principal organizers of this international project.

Closer to home, the park has been involved in a Civic Engagement project with Discover Roxbury. *Roxbury and the Ameri-*

can Revolution, the subject of a special four-page insert in this issue, involves working with a variety of groups to develop a tour and education program on Roxbury's role during the 1775-1776 Siege of Boston.

"Collaborating with a community to tell this important story is vital to the mission of Boston National Historical Park," said Superintendent Terry Savage. "Civic Engagement projects revive community interest in local history, particularly the nearly forgotten story of the role of local African-Americans, and give young people in the community a clear and powerful voice in reclaiming their history," he added.

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON